

Made in God's Image

(Genesis 1:26-31)

"When you believe that men sprang from animals, it's much easier to treat them like animals rather than people made in the image of God. Do you want me to tell you why we have so much difficulty with young people today and ... [the] philosophy, 'If it feels good, do it'? Because we've finally gotten across the idea that man is an animal, ... [and] an animal lives for three things: self-preservation, self-propagation, and self-gratification. That's ... what we've taught our generation. They have been taught that they are not made in the image of God—that they just happened, that they're an accident—out of spontaneous generation. God forbid."¹

How are we created in God's image? (see also [Genesis 5:3; 9:6](#))

1. **Our Design** – we are *spiritual beings*, with spirit, soul and body ([1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12](#))

"One thing it means is that men and women possess the attributes of personality, as God himself does, but as the animals, plants, and matter do not. To have personality one must possess knowledge, feelings (including religious feelings), and a will. This God has, and so do we. We can say that animals possess a certain kind of personality. But an animal does not reason as men do; it only reacts to certain problems or stimuli. It does not create; it only conforms to certain behavior patterns, even in as elaborate a pattern as constructing a nest, hive, or dam. ... It does not worship. Personality, in the sense we are speaking of it here, is something that links man to God but does not link either man or God to the rest of creation."²

God created us to relate to God. [Romans 5:11 \(The Living Bible\)](#) – "Now we rejoice in **our wonderful new relationship with God**—all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins—making us friends of God. "

"[God] knew, of course, that in the fullness of time even He would become a man. In that day, He would prepare a human body for His Son ([Hebrews 10:5; Luke 1:35](#)) and it would be "**made in the likeness of men**" ([Philippians 2:7](#)), just as man had been made in the likeness of God."⁶

"[M]an is made for communion with God, who is Spirit ([John 4:24](#)), and that this communion is **intended to be eternal as God is eternal**. Although man shares a body with such forms of life as plants or flowers and a soul with animals, only he possesses a spirit. It is on the level of the spirit that he is aware of God and communes with him."³

¹ Adrian Rogers, "The World in a Week," in *Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Ge 1:1–5.

² James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 90.

⁶ Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 74-75.

³ Boice, 91.

2. **Our Differences** – we are human beings, biologically male or female (Genesis 1:27)

Genesis 1:27 says, “**male and female he created them.**” God reveals Himself in a male image: Father, Son and Spirit. Jesus came to this earth as a man. But that does not mean that we all, men and women alike, do not reflect the image of God as we live out who He created us to be.

“Men are not women. Women are not men. One of the saddest things in the universe is a man who tries to be a woman or a woman who tries to be a man. ‘But who is superior?’ someone asks. I answer: **A man is absolutely superior to a woman—at being a man; a woman is absolutely superior to a man—at being a woman.** But let a woman try to be a man or a man try to be a woman, and you have a monstrosity.”⁴

3. **Our Discernment** – we are moral beings, knowing right from wrong.

“We know right from wrong. A dog doesn’t know right from wrong. You can train a dog to do what you tell it, but it has no moral conscience that causes it to think, “I shouldn’t be eating out of garbage cans, I need to get into a recovery program.” “Hi, my name is Spot and I eat garbage.” A mouse that invades your house doesn’t have a conscience. It doesn’t lay awake at night wondering if it was right to steal that piece of cheese, agonizing over its place in the world. When Adam and Eve sinned, they immediately felt shame. God created us to be moral beings. (Gen. 3:7; Acts 24:16).”⁵

4. **Our Dominion** – we are responsible beings, to rule the earth as God’s regent. (Genesis 1:28)

This is dominion for the entire human race, as Genesis 1:26 says, “**Let them have dominion...**”

Genesis 2:19 – Adam is naming the animals. Genesis 2:15 – Adam is told to “tend” and “keep” the Garden.

“Man’s very posture, standing upright, distinguishes him from four-footed beasts and creeping things. The animals’ natural posture directs their gaze downward, toward the earth. Man, on the other hand, is naturally positioned to look upward, toward the heavens, where he can contemplate the glory of God displayed there.”⁶

Martin Luther wrote, “I am fully convinced that before Adam’s sin his eyes were so sharp and clear that they surpassed those of the lynx and eagle. He was stronger than the lions and the bears, whose strength is very great; and he handled them the way we handle puppies.” Luther states about Adam’s intellectual powers, “If ... we are looking for an outstanding philosopher, let us not overlook our first parents while they were still free from sin.”⁵

5. **Our Destiny** – we are eternal beings

Hebrews 9:27 - And as it is appointed for men to die once, but **after this** the judgment.

Our Response:

- Because all mankind was made in the image of God, both male and female have equal value and worth, and each ethnicity has equal value and worth (Acts 17:26-28; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:13-15).

- Because human life begins at conception, and those babies are made in the image of God, they should be given the same chance to live that each of us have had. Christians should be unashamedly pro-life, from the womb to the end of life (Psalm 139:13-16; Luke 1:15, 41, 44; Exodus 20:13; Proverbs 31:8).

- Because we bear God’s image, we belong to God. Jesus said, “**Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and give to God what is God’s**” (Matthew 22:19-21).

⁴ Boice, 96.

⁵ Holladay and Warren, *Foundations church curriculum* (Saddleback Resources, Lake Forest, CA), under “Creation”.

⁶ John MacArthur, *The Battle for the Beginning* (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2001), 165–166.

⁵ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Genesis Chapters 1–5*, vol. 1 of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), 62, 66.